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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (06/17): "AHMADINIYAD'S VICTORY  
NOT IN PALESTINIAN INTERESTS"

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Main Stories:  
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Al-Quds and Al-Ayyam lead with news of continued Iranian protests against the results of recent presidential elections. Al-Ayyam runs separate front page coverage citing AFP of comments by President Obama in an interview with CNBC on June 16 noting that the difference between the policies of the two lead presidential candidates is not great and either winning will mean that the U.S. will have to deal with a hostile Iranian regime.

Al-Hayat Al-Jadida leads with news citing wafa and Reuters about Palestinian Authority President Abbas' meeting with Middle East Quartet Envoy Blair in Ramallah on June 16. In the meeting, Abbas stated that he believes that peace and coexistence with Israel will ultimately be achieved. Abbas briefed Blair on Israeli restrictions that hinder the development of the Palestinian economy, especially crossing point closures and checkpoints in the West Bank and Gaza. Blair assured Abbas that the Middle East Quartet remains committed to the development of the Palestinian economy, according to coverage that appears on all front pages.

Al-Ayyam's front page cites DPA in reporting that EU Foreign Ministers on June 15 condemned Israeli settlement activity in the Palestinian Territories, including "natural growth," calling it "illegitimate." The ministers called on Israel to immediately halt all settlement activity, according to coverage.

Al-Quds' front page runs remarks by President Obama made during his joint press conference with Italian Premier Berlusconi about Israeli Premier Netanyahu's June 14 speech. In related news, Al-Hayat Al-Jadida's front page cites wires in reporting that Netanyahu intends to "pursue negotiations" with President Obama regarding settlement activity, especially natural growth.

All dailies front page an announcement by the Palestinian Authority Minister of Health on June 16 that three cases of H1N1 have been reported in the Palestinian Territories. Reporting mentions that the cases are Palestinian students just arriving from the U.S. without further detail. The Ministry noted that the cases were contained, reporting concludes.

Al-Hayat Al-Jadida runs front page coverage citing wafa on 180 U.S. organizations in more than 32 states submitting an appeal to President Obama on June 16 calling for a freeze or suspension of U.S. military support to Israel if Israel does not accept American policy initiatives (two-state solution), according to coverage.

Al-Quds runs front page coverage of an exclusive interview with Hamas leader Zahhar noting that he believes that agreement can be reached among Palestinian factions to end internal division during July 7 talks in Cairo. Zahhar also noted that Hamas will respect the results of any "transparent" Palestinian elections. Zahhar praised President Obama's June 4 speech and reiterated that concrete steps are now needed. Zahhar wondered whether Israeli and foreign lobbies in the U.S. will give Obama the chance to implement his vision for ending the Palestinian -Israeli conflict.

All front pages run prominent photo and written coverage on former U.S. President Carter's visit to Gaza on June 16 and his meeting with the "Hamas government." Al-Ayyam runs a front page photo of Carter and Hamas leader Hanniyah talking to the press. Hanniyah confirmed Hamas openness to any peace settlement that is based on establishing a Palestinian state along the 1967 borders and stressed

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that Hamas and other factions support the truce with Israel. Hanniyah praised President Obama's June 4 speech and again noted that it has, "new language, a new tone and a new spirit." For his part, Carter told press that he hoped to see Palestinian factions reconcile and pledged to share with President Obama, Secretary Clinton and Envoy Mitchell, all of what he saw in Gaza in terms of destruction resulting from the recent conflict in Gaza. Carter underscored that the U.S. bears responsibility for the destruction, according to coverage.

In economic news, Al-Hayat Al-Jadida runs inside coverage of USAID West Bank/Gaza Mission Director Sumka visiting USAID projects in Jenin district on June 16.

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BLOCK QUOTES:  
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1) Hamadah Fara'nah opines in Al-Ayyam independent daily under the title, "The ball is in the U.S. court"(06/17):" In his speech, Netanyahu tried to create middle ground between his ideology and the U.S. vision of halting settlements and acceptance of the two-state solution. However, he neither accepted the Palestinian state nor approved of halting settlement activities. The situation will remain unresolved with no concrete change on the ground and, of course, no negotiations... Obama has to face his responsibility before the international community and defend the credibility of his policies. If he can't convince Netanyahu to pursue negotiations and recognize Palestinian rights, then at least he should stop providing shelter for Netanyahu's extremist beliefs."

2) Khalid Al-Hroub opines in Al-Ayyam independent daily under the title, "Ahmadinijad's victory doesn't serve the Palestinians" (06/17): "I don't see any reason why Palestinians would celebrate Ahmadinijad's victory in recent Iranian elections. This victory will harm the Palestinian cause and negatively reflect on Palestinians. Having Nijad as the Iranian President for another four years means more marginalization and isolation of Palestinians on the international and regional scenes."

WALLES